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The Lack Of Symptoms Doesn't Reflect AIDS' Early Strength

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But two new studies reported in the March 25 issue of *Nature* overturn this theory. Researchers at the University of Minnesota at Minneapolis, the National Institutes of Health, and other institutions have found massive amounts of the virus present during the early, symptomless stage of the disease. Up to 25% of the cells in the lymph nodes are infected with the virus, reports the team led by Minnesota's Ashley T. Haase.

The results raise questions about current treatment. If so many immune-system cells are infected, drugs that are typically given later may not control the disease. The findings suggest that drugs should be started as soon as the infection is discovered. That "might reduce the amount of virus later", says oncologist Howard M. Temin of the University of Wisconsin, who co-authored an analysis of the studies in *Nature*.

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